

HIS 211: The United States to 1865

Professor Mark Elliott
Office: 2125 MHRA
Office Hours: M-W 10:30-11:30
or by appointment
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Teaching Assistants:
Mr. Todd Miller
Ms. Margaret Williams
Ms. Monica Ward

Monday and Wednesday Lectures:

9:00-9:50 FERGUSON 100 Dr. Elliott

Friday Discussion Sections:

Section 01	9:00-10:00	STON 369	Mr. Miller
Section 02	9:00-10:00	SOEB 108	Ms. Williams
Section 03	9:00-10:00	MHRA 1208	Ms. Ward
Section 04	10:00-11:00	STON 369	Mr. Miller
Section 05	10:00-11:00	SOEB 108	Ms. Williams
Section 06	10:00-11:00	MHRA 1206	Ms. Ward

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys the social, cultural, and political history of the nation from the conquest and colonization of America, to the reunification of the United States at the end of the American Civil War. Some of the issues covered include: When does the history of the "United States" begin? How did Europeans, Indians and Africans interact and how were the cultures of each group influenced and transformed by their interactions? How and why did the institution of slavery begin? How did the Americans reconcile ideas of popular self-rule with the reality of American slavery? How did conflicting political ideas about Republican government shape the constitution and divide the Revolutionary generation? How did the rise of capitalism transform class and gender roles in American society? What has been the relationship between democracy and capitalism? What was the relationship between slavery and capitalism? Why and how did the political controversy over slavery "cause" the American Civil War? Why did the Confederacy fail?

These are just some of the issues that students must confront when they study early American history. Because of its broad historical sweep, the variety of topics covered in this course make no claim to be comprehensive. No single course can cover all of the important issues over two hundred and fifty years of American history. Therefore this course focuses on particular events, historical figures, and social issues that illuminate the issues and experiences of the time that have been of the greatest current interest to historians. Special attention will be given to correcting popular myths and

misconceptions about American history. It is hoped that the material explored in this course will provide the student with a springboard to further study in American history where issues of particular interest can be studied in more depth.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Students will establish a strong foundation of knowledge in the major themes and events in American history before 1865.
- Students will improve their ability to analyze and interpret historical documents.
- Students will improve their ability to make historical arguments, drawing upon primary source documents.
- Students will improve their writing and verbal skills.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:

A student who is not present to sign the attendance sheet when it circulates at beginning of class will be marked “absent.” Once the sheet has circulated the room, no late students will be allowed to sign it. Students who leave class early without permission will be marked absent. More than five absences will lower your *Final Grade* by one-third of a grade for each subsequent absence (that is, your sixth absence will cause a “B” to become a “B-,” your seventh will make it a “C+,” your eighth will make it a “C,” etc.). Missing a total of 14 or more classes for any reason (one-third of the semester) will result in an automatic “F” for the course. No exceptions. We do not accept doctor’s notes or other excuses. Please use your 5 un-penalized absences wisely by saving them for emergencies or severe illness. Students are responsible to complete on time all work assigned or due on days in which they are absent.

Participation:

You must take notes during class lectures and be attentive and awake during class. Sleeping in class will cause you to be marked “absent.” Cell phones should be muted or turned off and stored away. No talking, texting, twittering, e-mailing or internet surfing during class. No laptop computers may be used for note-taking.

Students are expected to complete the reading assignments in time to participate in their weekly discussion sections with your assigned Teaching Assistant. It is important that you participate actively in your discussion section. Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions in the discussion sections—not the quantity of contributions you make. Please make your contributions informed, intelligent, and constructive.

Short Reflection papers:

Students must write a three paragraph response to the reading each week, totaling no less than 200 words, to be turned in on Fridays in discussion section. Questions by your Instructor to guide your response papers will be posted to the Blackboard site no later than 1 pm on Wednesday before your discussion section. These short papers will be graded according to the quality of the writing, the accuracy of the information, and the depth of its engagement with the reading assignment.

Written Work:

There will be one term paper of 1600-1850 words in length. You must write your term paper on one of three assigned topics. You will be assigned a topic by your Instructor. Paper due dates are as follows:

- Topic #1: September 23**
- Topic #2: October 14**
- Topic #3: November 18**

Late papers will be marked down one grade for each day they are late. An assignment sheet with the term paper topic questions will be distributed in class. In order to pass this course you must hand in all written work and complete all assignments. You will be required to take your paper to the Writing Center at least 3 days in advance of the due date for help revising it before the due date. You will have the option of revising your paper a second time after it is graded. See the attached grading rubric for details on the grading criterion.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using the “Safe Assignment” function on Blackboard which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

Grading Formula:

- 10% Class participation
- 20% Short Reflection papers
- 30% Term Paper
- 20% Midterm
- 20% Final Exam.

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG’s Bookstore):

Oakes, et al. *Of the People: A Concise History of the United States, Vol. I.*
Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God.*
Thomas Paine, *Common Sense and other Writings*
Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*
Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*

Further short reading assignments will be distributed via the Class Blackboard site.

Week 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 1.
Documents on Blackboard: Voyage of Verrazano (1524); Pope Paul's Decree (1537).

Aug. 22 Course introduction: Where to begin U.S. history?
Aug. 24 The Conquest of America
Aug. 26 Discussion Section

Week 2. EUROPEAN COLONIZATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 2-3.
Documents on Blackboard: Equiano's Narrative (1789);

Aug. 29 British Colonization Begins
Aug. 31 Puritan New England
Sept. 2 Discussion Section.

Week 3. SLAVERY AND FREEDOM IN AMERICA

Reading: Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*, all.

Sept. 5 **LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)**
Sept. 7 Slavery in the American Colonies
Sept. 9 Discussion Section

Week 4. IMPERIAL WARS AND RIVALRIES

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 4-5.
Documents on Blackboard: "Summation from Trial of John Peter Zenger (1735); Bacon's Declaration (1676); Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." (1741)

Sept. 12 Growth of British North America
Sept. 14 France, Indians, and War
Sept. 16 Discussion Section

Week 5. THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 6.
Documents on Blackboard: Patrick Henry Speech (1775); Oliver Branch Petition (1775); Thomas Jefferson's draft of Declaration of Independence (1776).

Sept. 19 Crises of the 1760s
Sept. 21 Declaring Independence
Sept. 23 Discussion Section [Paper topic #1 due]

Week 6. REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Reading: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, all

Sept. 26 The War Against the British
Sept. 28 The Impact of the War
Sept. 30 Discussion Section

Week 7. FOUNDING A NATION

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 7-8
Documents on Blackboard: U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; Objections from a former Continental Army Officer (1787).

Oct. 3 The 1787 Constitution, and its Ratification.
Oct. 5 The Tumultuous 1790s
Oct. 7 Discussion Section

Week 8. JEFERSONIAN AMERICA

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 9.
Documents on Blackboard: Washington's Farewell Address (1796) Jefferson's Inaugural Address (1801)

Oct. 10 **FALL BREAK**
Oct. 12 Jefferson's America
Oct. 14 Discussion Section [Paper topic #2 due]

Week 9. THE END OF THE FOUNDING GENERATION

Reading: Exam review.

Oct. 17 Embargo and The War of 1812
Oct. 19 The Missouri Compromise and Slavery's Expansion
Oct. 21 **Midterm Exam**

Week 10. POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 10-11.
Documents on Blackboard: Cherokee Memorial (1829); Andrew Jackson on Indian Removal (1830); The Trail of Tears (1838)

Oct. 24 The Market Revolution
Oct. 26 Rise of the Second Party System
Oct. 28 Discussion Section

Week 11. DEMOCRACY AND SLAVERY

Reading: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, all.

Oct. 31 Indian Removal and the Nullification Crisis
Nov. 2 Slavery, Abolitionism and Sectionalism in Politics
Nov. 4 Discussion Section

Week 12. ANTEBELLUM POLITICS AND CULTURE

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 12-13.

Documents on Blackboard: Child, *The Frugal Housewife* (1829);
On Temperance (1869); Declaration of Sentiments (1848);
Margaret Fuller (1845)

Nov. 7 Religious Reform and the Northern Middle Class
Nov. 9 Westward Expansion and the Mexican-American War
Nov. 11 Discussion Section

Week 13. POLITICAL MELTDOWN

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 14.
Documents on Blackboard: Dew on Nat Turner (1832); John C. Calhoun (1848); George Fitzhugh (1850) and (1854).

Nov. 14 The Compromise of 1850
Nov. 16 The Rise of the Republican Party
Nov. 18 Discussion Section [Paper topic #3 due]

Week 14. THE CIVIL WAR

Reading: Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, all.

Nov. 21 The Secession Crisis 1860-61
Nov. 23 **THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)**
Nov. 25 **THANKSGIVING (NO CLASS)**

Week 15. WAR AND EMANCIPATION

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 15.

Nov. 28 The Road to Emancipation

Nov. 30 Union Victory

Dec. 2 Discussion Section

Week 16. DEFEAT OF THE CONFEDERACY

Reading: Documents on Blackboard: Responses to the Emancipation Proclamation (1863); Gettysburg Address (1863); Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Address (1865).

Dec. 5 Union Victory and Reconstruction

Week 17 FINAL EXAM

Dec. 12 (Monday) 8:-00-11:00 pm in FERG 100

GRADING RUBRIC FOR TERM PAPERS

Thesis/ Argument	Summary/Analysis	Originality/ Sophistication	Citation and integration of evidence	Writing Style

3 points are possible in each category. The criteria for a “3” in each category are listed below.

Thesis/Argument: Your main thesis is sophisticated, insightful, and clear. You sustain your argument effectively throughout the essay.

Summary and Analysis: Your paper engages the substance of the books in an analytical way and your descriptions of the content of the books is accurate.

Originality and Sophistication: Rather than offering generic, predictable, or obvious observations, your paper stands out by offering a perspective that is original, creative, and sophisticated.

Citation and integration of evidence: Your points are supported by evidence that is sufficient and relevant to your arguments. You introduce, cite, and explain all quotations. (Quotes are not randomly dropped into the text without any analysis. Each specific quote is integrated as evidence to support your arguments.)

Writing Style: You write in a clear, persuasive, and eloquent voice. Your paper is organized into a strong, coherent whole. Needless to say, it should be grammatically correct.

Points

- 13-15: A range
- 10-12: B range
- 7-9: C range
- 4-6: D
- 0-5 F